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Published in:
Global Society

DOI:
[10.1080/13600826.2017.1351422](https://doi.org/10.1080/13600826.2017.1351422)

Publication date:
2018

Citation for published version (APA):
Efstathopoulos, C. (2018). Middle Powers and the Behavioural Model. *Global Society*, 32(1), 47-69.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13600826.2017.1351422>

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Middle Powers and the Behavioural Model

Charalampos Efstathopoulos

Abstract

The behavioural model comprises a major theoretical tradition in the field of middle powers since it identifies the distinct behavioural patterns in the diplomacy of these states. Its relevance, however, has been questioned since it continues to rely on older definitions of middle power behaviour and places emphasis on diplomatic preferences rather than influence. To strengthen the relevance of the behavioural model, this article proposes an additional distinctive category that prioritises ideational influence and entrepreneurial effectiveness as key prerequisites for identifying middle powers. The article examines the cases of Brazil and South Africa to argue that states classified as middle powers must not only pursue the diplomatic preferences and strategies that comprise middle power internationalism, but also display the capacity to advance and secure their preferred outcomes at the international level.

Key-words: Middle powers; behavioural model; internationalism; Brazil; South Africa.

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Introduction

The middle power concept has re-emerged in recent years as a popular approach for theorising non-great powers and the term has witnessed a revival given the amount of scholarship that is using this term. The rise of the global South in particular has led to expanding the middle power category to include a number of leading developing countries. The IBSA states (India, Brazil, South Africa) have closely been associated with the concept for the past two decades, while more recently, the MIKTA group (Mexico, Indonesia, South Korea, Turkey, and Australia) has emerged to accommodate the interests of both established and emerging middle powers that seek to maximise their influence through new forms of coalition-building. At the same time, scholars have continued to dedicate attention to whether traditional middle powers such as Australia and Canada maintain a middle power status in the contemporary global system. Current developments such as the global economic crisis and the reform of global governance suggest that the demands placed upon middle powers are changing (Cooper, 2013). Increasing pluralism in global governance provides greater opportunities for states to assume middle power roles, but at the same time, inter-state competition for such positions has intensified substantially. In this respect, prospective middle powers will have to meet more demanding criteria for justifying such status in international relations, while the classification of middle powers must accommodate additional analytical variables.

The literature on middle powers has traditionally been centred on the positional and behavioural models: the former identifies middle powers through the material capabilities that possess and the latter through the specific patterns they display in their diplomatic behaviour. The broader consensus in the literature is that middle-ranking states must also meet a set of additional behavioural variables in order to be classified as middle powers (Gilley and O'Neil, 2014a; Wang and French, 2013). While existing works provide extensive justifications on why particular states possess sufficient capabilities to be classified as middle powers, they often draw from existing and often out-dated behavioural definitions to explain why their chosen case studies also display the relevant diplomatic behaviour. The behavioural criteria used in the current literature mostly derive from older definitions that have not been extensively re-examined in the context of contemporary international relations. In this respect, the

discussion on material capabilities has evolved to account for changes in hard power project, and especially for the cases of developing countries and emerging economies, in contrast to a more static understanding of how middle powers behave diplomatically.

This paper argues that the behavioural model can continue to constitute a core framework for identifying the preferences and behavioural patterns of middle powers, but requires an additional distinctive category in order to delineate the distinct types of internationalism and effectiveness that can be expected from contemporary middle powers. Such a distinctive category enhances the behavioural model by placing emphasis on types of ideational influence and entrepreneurial effectiveness that are not solely determined by material capabilities. Middle powers can therefore be understood not only as those middle-ranking states that advance distinct preferences and deploy distinct diplomatic methods, but also as those states that display both influence and effectiveness in realising their objectives at the international level.

To justify why this distinctive category is required, the article first discusses how the behavioural model helps identify the foreign policy innovations that are practiced by certain middle-ranking states, and then argues that such a framework requires additional criteria that can lead to enhancing its relevance as an analytical framework. In the second section, the article proposes a distinctive category of the behavioural model that prioritises ideational influence and entrepreneurial effectiveness as key prerequisites for identifying middle powers. In the final section, the article applies this category to the cases of Brazil and South Africa. The article concludes that states classified as middle powers will not only have to deploy the diplomatic methods associated with middle power internationalism, but also be effective in advancing preferences and securing outcomes at the international level.

Functionalism, identity and behaviour

The behavioural model identifies patterns of foreign policy that are exercised mostly or exclusively by middle powers, and uses these patterns to distinguish middle powers from other categories of states. As David and Roussel note, “a Middle Power is a state which has significant international and global interests and defends them by adopting

a security and foreign policy style distinct from that of the Great Powers” (David and Roussel, 1998, p. 135). Such diplomatic behaviour is also distinct from that of small states and other middle-ranking powers. The behavioural model presupposes a substantial degree of agency and a perception of the country’s leadership that encourages foreign policy activism and internationalism (ibid). For this reason, the behavioural model has often been associated with functionalist and identity approaches that examine how states explicitly assume a ‘middle power’ role.

Functionalism is an instrumental treatment of the middle power concept where a state adopts the ‘middle power’ label to declare its desired role in international affairs. Functionalism is developed in states where academic and policy-making circles deploy the idea of ‘middlepowermanship’ as the normative platform to operationalise their foreign policy agenda. Such middle power frameworks are subordinate to the foreign policy needs of self-identified middle powers and are attached to the historical experiences of these countries (Granastein, 1969; Holmes, 1970; Ungerer, 2007b). Functionalism represents the “ideologisation” of middlepowermanship since the concept is used to justify a special role for certain states, such as Australia and Canada (Ping, 2005, p. 1-8). Such states, however, may also internalise and project a middle power identity by embracing certain norms typical of middle power diplomacy (such as bridge-building diplomacy and humanitarianism), and self-imagining their roles in the international community as middle powers and responsible global citizens, although different states will have different perceptions of what that means (Patience, 2014).

The fluctuations in the performance of self-identified middle powers reveal how the middle power concept has been manipulated to justify to domestic and international audiences the foreign policy initiatives of these states. In certain cases, the foreign policies of Western middle powers have not matched the influence expected of a middle power, but have nevertheless been framed as middlepowermanship exactly because policy-makers seek to legitimise their policies and grant greater authority and legitimacy to their diplomatic initiatives. As Hynek notes: “the suggested discrepancy between the linearity of discourse (of a middle power) and the variability of policymaking concerning Canadian foreign and security policy is an important finding with respect to the methodology associated with middlepowerhood” (Hynek,

2007, p. 139). Middlepowermanship serves as “a kind of discursive cement between completely different political practices” (ibid, p.141), and, as a result, obscures the objective theorisation of middlepowermanship by associating the concept with political practices that fall short of the international influence that middle powers can normally deliver. Cox was one the first theorists to propose for detaching middlepowermanship from functionalism and treating the term as an ideal-type of statecraft and foreign policy orientation that needs to be recast in the context of the world order. As Cox argues, “the middle-power role is not a fixed universal but something that has to be rethought continually in the context of the changing state of the international system” (Cox, 1989, p. 242). Cooper also suggests de-linking the middle power role from the proclamations of state leaders: “the classification of middle powers as a separate class of countries in the hierarchy of nations stands or falls not on their subjective identification but on the fact that this category of actors engages in some distinctive form of activity” (Cooper, 1997a, p. 7).

Functionalism and identity approaches cannot therefore provide an independent analytical threshold for distinguishing middle powers since self-identification cannot determine the foreign policy performance of assertive middle-ranking states. Such theorisation “conflates the role identity (national self-conception) of middle power states, with the role performance (foreign policies) of those states in international politics” (Easley, 2012, p. 422). Since states can exhibit middle power behaviour without endorsing the ‘middle power’ concept, middle power classification cannot be based on politically charged contexts (Gilley and O’Neil, 2014a, p. 15). Many states that proclaim major power ambitions actually follow a middle power foreign policy, while self-identified middle powers will often fail to meet the standards of an independent analytical framework of middle power behaviour.

The behavioural model aims to address the ambiguities of functionalism and the subjectivity of self-identification, and proposes that middle powers can be identified by the framing and pursuit of distinct foreign policy agendas at the international level. States that possess middle-range capabilities but display lack of an internationalist foreign policy are not included in the middle power category. Middle power behaviour is evident in both the expression of a particular foreign policy agenda and the strategies deployed to realise this agenda. In both aspects, the major definition is

provided by Cooper, Higgott and Nossal (Cooper et al, 1993, pp. 19-25), and suggests that the behaviour of middle powers is defined by three major preferences: (i) projecting good international citizenship as the normative basis of foreign policy, (ii) seeking multilateral agreements to resolve global problems; and (iii) assuming crisis management initiatives to alleviate instability in global affairs. To realise these objectives, middle powers pursue three types of strategies: (i) niche diplomacy that helps concentrate diplomatic resources in specific regimes, (ii) intellectual and entrepreneurial leadership to overcome limitations in material resources, and (iii) coalition building with like-minded states (ibid).

While these behavioural patterns are envisaged to constitute a universal typology, the behavioural model has been criticised for its tautology. The problem of tautology is that “middle powers are those that practice middle power internationalism” while at the same time, “middle power internationalism describes the behaviour of middle powers” (Chapnick, 1999, p. 76). Middle powers are understood to adopt middle power behaviour because this reflects their national role conception and the expectations associated with foreign policy activism. The problem of tautology becomes evident when the behavioural model expands to include non-Western states. Since the behavioural model is historically defined by the experiences of Western middle powers, it appears that these experiences are arbitrarily applied to their foreign policy of non-Western states, even though the latter project different behavioural patterns (Robertson, 2005, pp. 19-24). This problem can potentially be solved by integrating new behavioural characteristics distinctive to non-Western states, but this causes a ‘conceptual stretching’ and a narrower use of the middle power concept that effectively renders the behavioural methodology as flawed and irrelevant (Manicom and Reeves, 2014, p. 31).

Three points can be put forward for addressing the problem of tautology. First, many authors, including certain critics, recognise that the problem of tautology becomes greater if we rely *exclusively* on behavioural patterns and preferences. As Ravenhill argues, “to identify middle powers primarily by reference to the activities they choose to pursue...is again to risk reducing the concept to little more than a tautology” (Ravenhill, 1998, p. 325). These activities are not a sufficient indicator since we need to identify the full range of choices and constraints that allow middle powers to engage

in such activities. Nevertheless, “an emphasis on diplomatic capabilities and the capacity to provide intellectual leadership is a useful starting point in attempting to define the core characteristics of middle powers” (ibid). In a similar vein, Shin argues that despite the criticism of tautology, the behavioural model allows for shifting the discussion “to the roles (middle powers) play and what they can *do* in the international arena” (Shin, 2015, p. 6, emphasis in original). It also detaches middle powers from “normative burdens” and altruistic politics, and allows for a more specific categorisation of the conditions and choices that allow middle power to perform a distinctive influential role (ibid). The behavioural model therefore contributes to identifying the greater commonalities between certain middle-ranking states (compared to other categories of states), and does not claim, as critics argue, to establish “common sets of relations between common patterns of middle-power behaviour” (ibid, p. 5).

In the same vein, Behringer notes that the behavioural model “is conducive for the development of a theory of middlepowermanship” because it shifts focus to a “subset” of middle-ranking states that display both the willingness and capacity to consistently engage in foreign policy internationalism (Behringer, 2013, p. 14). Such a behavioural contribution to middle power theorisation does not contradict the positional model, but complements and enhances it (Stephen, 2013). It is actually possible for the behavioural model to align with both positional and functionalist approaches. Such middle powers would meet all possible definitions; i.e. possessing middle-range material capabilities, adopting and projecting middle power identity, and exhibiting middle power behavioural patterns in its foreign policy (Gilley and O’Neil, 2014a, p. 15; Manicom and Reeves, 2014, p. 33). The behavioural can therefore accept that middle powers will occupy intermediate positions in the international hierarchy of states, and exhibit both material and behavioural attributes that allow them to pursue distinct diplomatic roles. While an over-reliance on specific behavioural attributes can be problematic and tautological, any definition of middle powers must include a set of broader behavioural criteria (Stephen, 2013, p. 39).

This clarification leads to a second point. The behavioural model can deal with the problem of tautology by accepting that middle powers must not conform to the very specific type of activism displayed by certain traditional (mainly Western) middle

powers. It is possible to detach and de-link middle power internationalism from country-specific experiences, even if the latter initially played an important role in defining the behaviour of middle powers. Such a strategy “avoids both the pitfalls of the normative-idealist view of middlepowermanship as well as resisting the temptation to reject it altogether” (Hynek, 2007, pp. 139-140). Instead, the middle power concept can be treated as an “empty form” or blank “political category” that can be re-constructed at different historical junctures (ibid, p. 140).

While behavioural approaches can recognise how certain Western states have historically defined middle power internationalism, they can also overcome these country-specific experiences and construct a “Weberian ideal type of middle power” (Carr, 2014, p. 74). Certain works have engaged in such an exercise to argue that despite the particular shape of internationalism that is projected by specific middle powers, certain core tendencies continue to characterise the behaviour of both Western and non-Western middle powers (Jordaan, 2003; Ping, 2005). The core behavioural patterns that derive from internationalism are relevant to both Western and non-Western states, even if such internationalism takes a different shape for each state. For example, middle powers can adopt different approaches to multilateralism, global citizenship and coalition-building, and their assertive foreign policies might support or challenge major power preferences. The emphasis itself, however, on multilateralism, global citizenship, coalition-building and an independent foreign policy remains at the core of the behavioural model (as discussed in detail in the next section).

Third, and linked to the above, the core patterns of the behavioural model appear to be consistently relevant to the study of middle-ranking states, independently of the historical role of Western middle powers in pursuing their preferred type of internationalism. Changing international conditions and the choices of middle-ranking states may, hypothetically, render the behavioural model irrelevant at a particular historical point. If international conditions do not permit for middle power internationalism and if states do not engage (either because of choice or constraint) in such activism, then the behavioural model will need to be radically revised or dismissed altogether. As Gilley and O’Neil note, however, “there has been a remarkable consistency in the general and unique expectations of middle power

behaviour since World War II, with only some modifications of the language used” (Gilley and O’Neil, 2014a, p. 10).

The actual developments that have occurred during and after the end of the Cold War appear to strengthen the relevance of the behavioural model. The formation of the G20 Leaders Summitry since 2008 and the reform processes in the Bretton Woods economic institutions have provided greater access to middle powers to participate in the management of key global issues (Cooper, 2013). Major powers such as the US and China have also invited middle powers to assume more responsible roles, recognising their ideational, rather than purely material, influence in shaping regional affairs (Azra, 2015). Also, the ability of states to influence international relations increasingly derives from functions such as ‘agenda-setting’, ‘custodianship’ and ‘sponsorship’, all of which demonstrate the potential of non-material forms of leadership to serve as alternative paths to shaping global conventions (Reich and Lebow, 2014, pp. 36-49). Against such favourable international conditions, certain groups of states (such as the IBSA and MIKTA states) are capable of, and willing to grasp the available opportunities and act as drivers of reform in key areas of global governance. Overall, both international conditions and the choices of certain middle-ranking states continue to favour the behavioural definitions of middle power internationalism. As the next section demonstrates, a new distinctive category of the behavioural model can contribute to further reinforcing the relevance of the behavioural model.

A distinctive category of the behavioural model

The first proposition of the behavioural model is that states can be classified as middle powers when they act as good international citizens that contribute to the welfare of the international community. Such ‘humane internationalism’ grants a normative ‘edge’ to the middle power concept, leading certain analysts to suggest that such novel motivations distinguish middle powers from other egoistic states (Pratt, 1990). Good international citizenship is often associated with the Nordic middle powers since these states have historically projected on the international stage their domestic socio-economic values of welfare, redistribution and human rights. The

normative context of good international citizenship often leads to the assumption that middle power foreign policy is driven by moral considerations and takes the form of Western liberal internationalism. This process, however, does not necessarily privilege cosmopolitan over national interests, but rather identifies the national interest in cosmopolitanism since the advancement of universal welfare and justice is perceived as essential for achieving a distinct international status. The normative context of good international citizenship has led to the misperception that small states, such as Norway and Denmark, which excel in demonstrating their peace credentials through internationalism can be classified as middle powers. While this was possible during the North-South dialogue of the 1970s, these states now struggle to retain a visible international status of *moralpolitik* due to increasing pluralism in global governance and competing forms of good international citizenship (Kuisma, 2007).

Altruism cannot therefore comprise a criterion for classifying middle powers for two reasons: first, because it is often driven by status-seeking behaviour, and, second, because it is traditionally framed in the language of Western liberal internationalism. With regards to the first aspect, behavioural approaches have argued that middle powers may act as guardians of humanitarian values for instrumental purposes, without having internalised these norms in their domestic institutions. National and cosmopolitan interests may be amalgamated in a form of enlightened self-interest that dictates for providing global public goods but at the same time enhances a state's international status (Neack, 2003, pp. 165-166; Wheeler and Dunne, 1998, pp. 853-7). Achieving a good citizen reputation is a major interest of middle powers since it allows them to enjoy an international status as credible actors and expect reciprocity from other states (Evans, 2011). Notwithstanding, however, the degree of altruism embedded in middle power foreign policy, the choice to engage in good citizenship remains an important criterion for identifying middle powers. As Nossal argues: "the key is the voluntary nature of the activity: in other words, one's self-interest would still be served if one chose not to engage in the acts of good international citizenship that are the hallmark of internationalism" (Nossal, 1998/99, p. 100). Behavioural approaches have clarified that states can qualify as middle powers if they demonstrate consistency and commitment in acting as good international citizens, even though such commitment may derive either from instrumental calculation or socialisation to humanitarian values.

Even when international moralpolitik, however, is detached from altruism and morality, it remains framed in the language of Western liberal internationalism. Such language fails to account for the types of good international citizenship that reflect non-Western values and address non-Western audiences. The ethical objectives pursued by Western good citizen states are contested by states in the global South that perceive the liberal order and the norms it entails as exclusionary and discriminatory (Linklater, 1992, pp. 32-33). For developing countries, a broader notion of global citizenship advances the democratic conduct of international relations and “requires support for collective action to improve the conditions of the unfairly excluded” (ibid, p. 36). Good international citizenship cannot be limited to Western solidarist values but may also embed pluralist values such as sovereignty, non-interference and non-intervention (Dunne, 2008, pp. 25-6). The alternative forms of global citizenship that are pursued by Southern powers espouse an international society that allows for reforming global governance to enhance the representation of the South, and promotes collective action against threats deriving from both Western hegemony and radical actors such as terrorist groups (Phillips, 2013). States can therefore be classified as middle powers if they consistently frame their foreign policy in a context of good international citizenship that is inclusive of, but not limited to liberal internationalism.

The second criterion of the behaviour model is that states can be classified as middle powers if they demonstrate a strong preference for multilateralism and engage in multilateral activism in their foreign policy. Such states perceive international institutions as the ideal framework for governing international affairs and strive to provide multilateral solutions to global problems (Nossal and Stubbs, 1997, p. 151). They also engage in multilateral activism to overcome a lack of bargaining power at the unilateral and bilateral level, and gain legality, legitimacy and moral authority for their assertive diplomatic initiatives (Henrikson, 1997). Given their propensity for good international citizenship, middle powers would have a greater stake in advancing multilateralism compared to other states due to their opportunities provided by multilateral arrangements for advancing their ideas and interests (Doran, 1989, p. 4). Prospective middle powers can use multilateral fora to project their image as good citizens on the global stage and demonstrate their ethical adherence to peace and stability (Schoeman, 2000). The behavioural model overall suggests that states

classified as middle powers will need to demonstrate a greater commitment to multilateralism, consensus-building and “cooperation-mindedness” compared to other states (Wood, 1987, pp. 25-6).

The problem with this definition is that the preference for multilateralism and multilateral activism does not necessarily translate into actual influence. States might have ambitious preferences for influencing international regimes but such ambitions often prove to be unrealistic. States that classify as middle powers would therefore need to be relatively effective in realising their multilateral objectives. If such influence is eroded, then multilateral activism remains an ambitious but unfeasible exercise in foreign policy. Certain behavioural works have noted how such influence must be evident, although the distinction between preference, activism and actual influence is not always clearly identified. For example, middle powers must “make contributions to multilateralism equal or greater than their status and resources as middle-sized states, (which allow for) distinguishing them as a significant category in the international hierarchy between the great powers and small states” (Doran, 1989, p. 4). They must be capable of sustaining the smooth operation of existing institutions or even supporting the formation of new institutions (Nossal and Stubbs, 1997, p. 151). They must also have the ability to protect their core interests against major powers and “alter or affect specific elements of the international system in which they find themselves” (Carr, 2014, p. 79). While these approaches stress the need to assess middle power influence, the degree and significance of such influence is not clarified. In this respect, it can be argued that most multilateral institutions could function in the absence of middle power agency. For middle power influence, however, to be truly identifiable we must assume that lack of such agency would affect the legitimacy and functionality of an international regime.

The third criterion of the behavioural model proposes that states can be classified as middle powers if they provide leadership in crisis management and demonstrate activism as intermediates in international disputes and conflicts. Crisis management logically derives from the aforementioned attributes of good international citizenship and preference for multilateralism, and can be evident in both the security and the economic sphere. Compared to major powers, certain middle-ranking states are not associated (at least not to the same degree) with hegemonic politics and are more

favourably viewed as neutral peace brokers (Hampson, 1992, p. 201). Since such states commit to acting as good international citizens, then assuming conflict-resolution initiatives is critical to enhancing their humanitarian status (ibid, pp. 203-4). As in the case of good international citizenship, crisis management cannot be misperceived as altruism but must be recast as status-seeking behaviour. Critical approaches to the behavioural model have provided such arguments to suggest that assuming crisis management initiatives reflects a world-view that favours a peaceful global order and stability (Cox, 1989; Jordaan, 2003; Neufeld, 1989).

While behavioural approaches examine how crisis management can comprise a status-seeking and interest-seeking strategy, they remain limited to focusing on preferences rather than actual impact. States that classify as middle powers, however, will have to be effective in crisis management rather than merely demonstrating a preference for mediating diplomacy. Previous behavioural approaches have been limited in making this clarification. In works where the issue of diplomatic ability is discussed, middle powers are understood to promote crisis management and systemic stability because of their inability to engage in systemic revisionism like major powers (David and Roussel, 1998, p. 135). Such a view, however, suggests that leadership in crisis management is a reflection of weakness rather than influence. This paper argues that states included in the middle power category would have to perform a critical role in maintaining or restoring the stability of international regimes. For such agency to truly matter, middle power diplomacy must provide the catalyst in alleviating impending or on-going crises, while lack of such involvement would have to be detrimental to resolving a crisis.

The fourth aspect of the behavioural model suggests that states that qualify as middle powers tend to perform niche diplomacy to secure their influence in international regimes (Cooper, 1997b). Niche diplomacy involves “concentrating resources in specific areas best able to generate returns worth having, rather than trying to cover the field” (Evans, 2011), and appeals to states lacking the capacity to spread their diplomatic resources across different regimes (Ravenhill, 1998, p. 311). Niche diplomacy is often misinterpreted as an innovative form of foreign policy that allows different states to ‘punch above their weight’. As Henrinksen, however, notes: “niche diplomacy, although often associated with very small countries, has in fact been more

fully developed by countries that have sufficient size and capacity to play notable roles on the international stage but that are not strong enough to impose their positions or solutions” (Henrikson, 2007, p. 67). Major powers can also dominate specific niches but do not face the need of practicing niche diplomacy. They can more effectively promote their preferences across multiple regimes while occasionally relying upon middle powers for resolving deadlocks that require neutrality and mediation (ibid).

Such previous treatments of niche diplomacy assume a certain degree of influence but do not clarify the relationship between multilateral activism and niche diplomacy. The assumption seems to be that states that act as middle powers have an interest in various areas of multilateralism but can only realistically shape a proportion of such fora. Again, the disharmony between preferences and actual influence becomes evident. Given the above arguments that middle powers must demonstrate actual multilateral influence, the notion of niche diplomacy must be redefined as a broader form of selective engagement that entails two dimensions. First, selective engagement cannot be limited to a single area but must entail multiple areas of multilateralism. Second, selective engagement must target at critical and not peripheral areas of global governance. Such broader engagement requires middle powers to continuously engage with multiple niches and re-assess their options at critical historical junctures, such as the end of the Cold War (Potter, 1996/97). Selective engagement requires middle powers to provide advanced solutions to complex international problems and successfully interpret developments in international affairs in order to concentrate on the areas that require diplomatic intervention. Selective engagement can therefore be exercised across multiple regimes and for considerable duration, though it does not amount to the structural leadership exercised by major powers.

The fifth aspect of the behavioural model proposes that states can qualify as middle powers when they provide intellectual and entrepreneurial leadership. Intellectual leadership allows states to shape negotiating outcomes through innovative policy-making ideas, while entrepreneurial leadership refers to bargaining skills that help build consensus and overcome deadlocks (Young, 1991). Such forms of leadership allow middle powers to act as catalysts, facilitators and bridge-builders in regime formation and management (Cooper et al, 1993, pp. 24-25). Certain approaches note

that such forms of leadership can aggregate to a broader “directional leadership” that “sets an example others can follow” and persuades other states to adopt specific ideas and negotiating positions (Kanie, 2003, p. 342). States that excel in such roles may not possess extensive material capabilities as expected by the positional model, but can deploy ideational resources such as bureaucratic capacity, technical expertise and policy-making knowledge (Lee, 1999, pp. 20-24). Behavioural approaches use these definitions extensively to argue that middle powers are distinguished from other states by the ideational resources that are operationalised through their niche diplomacy (Higgott and Cooper, 1990).

Such approaches to middle power leadership reveal the limitations of the positional model by suggesting that many states that possess material capabilities may lack the diplomatic skills that help engage with multilateral regimes. Middle power leadership entails a mix of material and ideational resources (and the balance between the two may be different for each state), but it is the latter that allows middle powers to perform assertive diplomatic roles. In comparison, major powers command a greater array of resources and are unlikely to depend upon intellectual and entrepreneurial leadership as primary tools of foreign policy. The behavioural model is recognised for its contribution to identifying such alternative forms of leadership, but these forms are frequently understood as largely constrained by major power politics (Emmers and Teo, 2015). Certain behavioural approaches note how middle powers can act as ‘norm entrepreneurs’ in areas dominated by major power interests, such as international security, international peacekeeping and nuclear disarmament (Behringer, 2012; Ungerer, 2007a). Such perspectives note that middle power initiatives may challenge the core interests of major powers, but remain cautious in suggesting that such initiatives will be met with varying degrees of success. For the distinctive behavioural model proposed in this paper, intellectual and entrepreneurial leadership should withstand the pressures of major powers and middle powers should be able to act against the preferences of major powers even when the latter exercise their structural leadership in certain multilateral fora. States that qualify as middle powers would need to be effective in providing intellectual and entrepreneurial leadership not only in support, but also against the interests of major powers, and be effective in securing some of their core demands. Even when such forms of leadership do not secure the

preferred outcomes, they must be critical in enhancing middle power capabilities, such as the moral status and prestige.

The final aspect of the behavioural model suggests that states that qualify as middle powers are inclined to form and lead coalitions with like-minded states (Higgott and Cooper, 1990; Lovbraek, 1990; Wood, 1990). Middle powers face resource constraints when acting unilaterally and bilaterally, and are therefore inclined to provide leadership in forming coalitions that allow them to exert disproportionate influence and establish relations of cooperation that are greatly facilitated by their entrepreneurial skills (Ravenhill, 1998, p. 312). Intellectual and entrepreneurial leadership allow middle powers to engage smaller states through process of persuasion and consensus building, rather than domination and coercion. Small states are more willing to joining groups deemed as more egalitarian and not dominated by major power politics (Lee, 1999, pp.20-23). Compared to other states, middle powers will demonstrate a great proclivity to leading coalitions with like-minded states and mobilising these to engage major powers in key multilateral fora (Gilley and O'Neil, 2014b, p. 245; Hundt, 2011). Such groups may also entail cooperation between different middle powers that share a world-view that favours good international citizenship and multilateral activism (Hornsby and Van Heerden, 2013). Compared to other states, middle powers exhibit a more assertive coalition behaviour that aims to socialise and engage major powers, and avoid being confined to merely reacting to major power policies (Son, 2014). They may follow assertive 'network positioning' and 'exclusive minilateralism' that accommodates different state and non-state actors but excludes major power participation (Watson, 2015).

The traditional behavioural model assumes that middle powers will be relatively more effective in forming like-minded coalitions given their strengths as intellectual and entrepreneurial leaders. This approach can be problematic since such forms of coalitions can also be led by other states. A distinctive category of the behavioural model suggests that middle powers can provide leadership that is both indispensable in facilitating certain types of coalitions, and distinct from the band-wagoning and counter-balancing functions normally performed by other states. Indispensable leadership would mean that certain like-minded groups could not be formed in the absence of a middle power acting as the catalyst for cooperation. Middle power

coalitions would have to fulfil assertive roles and strategies that are not available to other regional or small states. Other middle-range states that lack entrepreneurial skills would have to resort to material interests for mobilising allied states and the degree of like-mindedness in such coalitions would be limited (at least initially) to common material gains. Middle power leadership must therefore be understood as indispensable not only in comprising the catalyst for the formation of like-minded coalitions, but also for attaining a convergence of state preferences not evident in other coalitions. Indispensable leadership must also entail a substantial degree of assertiveness and autonomy against major powers, maintaining coalition cohesion without being confined to a purely reactive mode.

Cases of middle power behaviour: Brazil and South Africa

The distinctive category of the behaviour model presented above can help clarify how different emerging and middle-range states can be categorised as middle powers. Brazil and South Africa can provide two relevant case studies for the behavioural model. In recent years, the two states have been included in the prestigious BRICS coalition that represents the leading economies of the global South, yet they have faced substantial limitations to their foreign policy ambitions that raise questions over their capacity to act as major players on a global scale. This final section examines whether the two countries meet the six behavioural criteria of the behavioural model outlined above, and helps understand how the distinctive category of the behavioural model can comprise a more coherent framework for classifying middle powers.

The first aspect of the behavioural model suggests that states can be classified as middle powers if they consistently frame their foreign policy in a context of good international citizenship that is inclusive of, but not limited to liberal internationalism. Brazil and South Africa have consistently framed their foreign policy in a form of good international citizenship that integrates elements of liberal internationalism and Third Worldism. Brazil has traditionally endorsed the fundamental norms and values of the liberal international order, and especially the norms of non-intervention, self-determination and equality of states. It has also supported the normative framework of Responsibility to Protect (RtP), but has opposed the distortion of the concept through

hegemonic, selective and unilateral practices of military intervention. In cases such as Kosovo, Libya and Syria, the Brazilian position has been that humanitarian intervention cannot be the pretext for regime change and must always be subject to the authority of the UNSC (Tourinho, 2015). South Africa has also demonstrated a commitment to resolving humanitarian crises, promoting regional stability and contributing to sustainable transitions to liberal democracy and good governance in post-conflict societies. South Africa's approach, however, is critical of the Western Responsibility to Protect (R2P) discourse, and emphasises 'quiet diplomacy', transitional justice and transitional power sharing as the principal pillars for achieving peace and stability (Beresford, 2015).

For both Brazil and South Africa, solidarity with developing countries has often prevailed over liberal inclinations as both states have strived to act as representatives of the global South. For Brazil, the shift towards South-South solidarity and the support for greater equity, justice and fairness in the international society of states has been strongly evident during the Lula administration (2003-11). Brazil's efforts at consolidating its status as leader of the developing world have even led it to accept certain costs in terms of pursuing its own material interests in fora such as the G20 and the World Trade Organisation (WTO) (Doctor, 2015). For this reason, Brazil has refrained from assertively pursuing its national developmental interests in issues such as food security and duty & quota free (DFQF) market access in the WTO, and exchange rate misalignment and currency wars in the G20 (ibid). South Africa also gradually shifted to a Southern agenda in its foreign policy during the Mbeki administration (1999-2008) and this trend has been enhanced under the current Zuma presidency (2008-). South Africa's bridge-building position between the West and Africa has often been undermined by the country's willingness to defend the sovereignty of so-called 'rogue' states such as Iran and Zimbabwe, and adopt a critical stance towards institutions such as the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and the International Criminal Court (ICC) (Black and Hornsby, 2016).

The propensity of Brazil and South Africa towards good international citizenship demonstrates their preoccupation with enhancing their international status. Such status-seeking behaviour has propelled the two states to address both a Western and a Southern audience. First, they have sought to appeal to the West as key partners that

can help bring stability to Southern regions in terms of economic development, democracy promotion, institution building, and resolution of humanitarian crises. While assuming such responsibilities facilitates the efforts of Brazil and South Africa to gain permanent member status in the UNSC, the two states have been reluctant to fully collaborate with the West for fear of abolishing their status as representatives of the global South. They have instead often prioritised providing public goods for developing countries by demanding greater recognition for Southern issues, such as poverty, inequality, non-interference and respect for sovereignty (Alden and Schoeman, 2015b; Hirst, 2015). In both countries, domestic NGOs and civil society actors have also placed pressure on their governments to remain committed to a more ethical foreign policy that favours humanitarian issues over geopolitical calculations. For both Brazil and South Africa, balancing between these different objectives has led to ambivalence and competing objectives in their foreign policies. Despite such contradictions, both Brazil and South Africa's foreign policy continues to be framed as a form of Southern international citizenship that advances norms of governance that are legitimate in the global South. While such a form of citizenship faces difficulties when it is operationalized (as discussed below), the consistency with which it is framed and projected allows both states to meet this first criterion of good international citizenship.

The second criterion of the behavioural model suggest that Brazil and South Africa can be classified as middle powers if they are effective in realising their multilateral objectives, and if their diplomatic agency affects the legitimacy and functionality of significant multilateral regimes. Brazil and South Africa have demonstrated a historical commitment to multilateralism and under the administrations of President Lula and President Mbeki, they adopted very active multilateral diplomacies. Their effectiveness, however, in shaping multilateralism has been questionable. It could be argued that Brazil and South Africa's multilateral influence has mostly evident in terms of legitimacy rather than material contribution. Certain institutions have been perceived as Western-centric, hegemonic and exclusionary, and can only be legitimised through the inclusion of middle-ranking states that allow for greater representation of non-Western regions, such as Africa and South America. Brazil and South Africa have been willing and able to secure such multilateral positions. Most multilateral institutions, however, could operate in the absence of Brazil and South

Africa's participation. The emerging polycentrism in global governance that is now exemplified by the G-20 summit has created conditions where middle powers have enhanced their position in the international hierarchy to achieve 'status equality' with major powers but also with other emerging states (Cooper, 2015). Such a fluid environment provides other middle powers such as MIKTA with the opportunities to act as 'policy innovators' in key areas of global governance (ibid).

In terms of geographical representation, Brazil has been unable to monopolise the role of the voice of South America. Other states like Argentina, Chile and Venezuela have not recognised Brazil's right to represent the continent in fora such as the G20 and the UNSC, while Mexico has been perceived by some states as a more successful economic model representing the broader Latin American region (Wehner, 2015). Also, President Rousseff's (2011-16) retreat from foreign policy activism has undermined Brazil's multilateral position since the country has failed to attend critical summits (G20, Davos World Economic Forum), has delayed payments to the UN, and has drastically reduced the budget allocation to the Ministry of External Affairs and to certain diplomatic missions abroad (Muggah, 2015). South Africa has enjoyed a relatively more advantageous position compared to Brazil, having maintained the title of Africa's largest economy for most the post-Cold War period, even though Nigeria gained such economic primacy during 2014 and 2016. South Africa has continued to monopolise the representation of Africa in global summits and has continuously been invited in multiple fora, such as the OECD, therefore enjoying the opportunity to address multiple audiences and project multiple identities (Alexandroff, 2015). Compared, however, to President's Mbeki's campaign for 'African Renaissance', the Zuma administration has not taken full advantage of the political space that it has enjoyed in multilateral fora. South Africa has not identified strategic priorities in its G20 diplomacy, has not grasped the opportunity to host a G20 conference, and has not collaborated with other members such as France and South Korea that favour promoting a developmental agenda (Alden and Schoeman, 2015a). To sum up, Brazil and South Africa have not affected the functionality and effectiveness of multilateral institutions, even though South Africa's multilateral position has retained a critical legitimacy function as Africa's sole representative.

The third criterion suggests that Brazil and South Africa must be effective in crisis management and contribute to global order and stability in order to be classified as middle powers. Despite fluctuations in their multilateral diplomacy, Brazil and South Africa are seen as democratic and economically liberal states that constantly retain the potential to contribute to global stability. The liberal order itself is understood to be strengthened by “democratic middle powers” such as Brazil, India and South Africa that commit to liberal values, as opposed to “part-time spoilers” such as China, Russia and Iran that remain ambivalent to integrating to liberal institutions (Ikenberry, 2014). In recent years, the democratic systems of Brazil and South Africa have been undermined by political instability, investigations of corruption, leadership failures (with President Rousseff impeached in 2016), and questions of legality over the practices of the major ruling parties (Vogl, 2016). Nevertheless, Brazil and South Africa’s developmental policies have contributed to alleviating both domestic and international crises. For Brazilian elites, an assertive foreign policy has comprised a legitimisation strategy that helps alleviating the adverse consequences of integrating into the global economy and promoting more inclusive agendas that address the marginalised segments of society (Sandal, 2014). South African governments have also sought to address the interests of different classes and groups through a humanitarian foreign policy that promotes the same objectives at the domestic and international level, and accommodates both liberalisation and redistribution policies (Van Der Westhuizen, 2013).

The propensity of Brazilian and South African diplomacy towards crisis management has served to diffuse deadlocks in different multilateral fora. In the early ministerials of the Doha Round of the WTO, both states acted as bridge-builders between North and South and helped sustain the centrality of the WTO as the principal forum for negotiating international trade (Alden and Vieira, 2005). Through their continuous focus at promoting Special and Differential Treatment (SDT) for developing countries, Brazil and South Africa contributed to collective understandings in the global South that the WTO comprises the main forum for addressing the relationship between trade and development. While the WTO has been partially undermined by the proliferation of bilateral and regional trade agreements after the 2008 economic crisis, the two states have strived to engage developed countries in the WTO. For example, Brazil’s co-sponsorship of a proposal with the EU in 2015 aimed to advance

a more ambitious package on the export competition pillar of agricultural liberalisation in order to persuade developed countries to remain committed to a comprehensive agricultural package. Brazil and South Africa have performed similar roles in areas like climate change, non-proliferation and humanitarian intervention, while their activism in global development issues has been driven, rather than undermined, by their domestic problems. For example, South Africa's approach has suggested that international development assistance is a commitment to be upheld even when domestic redistribution has not sufficiently advanced in alleviating poverty for many citizens domestically (Yanacopulos, 2014). The important observation here is that the agency of the two states has served to increase the participation and representation of developing countries in global governance, even if the outcomes of multilateral processes remain uncertain, as noted above. This is not a contradiction since both states have often opted for strengthening their Third World credentials to the detriment of adopting self-centred diplomatic approaches that would only satisfy their material interests. Their agency has propelled the global South to adopt more reformist positions and abolish revisionist tendencies, and has therefore contributed to regional and systemic stability.

The fourth criterion of the behaviour model suggests that Brazil and South Africa can be classified as middle powers if they demonstrate selective engagement in their foreign policies with multiple and critical areas of global governance. In the case of Brazil, the country's engagement with post-Cold War global governance has broadly entailed two major areas: the management of the global economy and development through activism in the WTO and other economic fora, and the management of global peace and security through participation in UN deliberations and peacekeeping operations (Christensen, 2013). During the Lula administration, the country's foreign policy became active in the majority of issues pertaining to global governance (including human rights, climate change, non-proliferation) in an effort to elevate Brazil to the rank of a major power. Brazil's engagement, however, has been constrained by two factors. First, it has remained dependant upon coalitions with other Southern states (such as IBSA and BRICS) in order to voice its preferences and promote a Southern view on how to resolve global hazards (Hirst, 2015). Second, limited access to the core decision-making of certain institutions (such as the UNSC, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund) has forced Brazil to advocate

for the reform of these institutions in order to create the conditions that would facilitate its global influence. Brazil's activism has therefore remained concentrated to particular areas of global governance while the country's passive foreign policy under Rouseff has increasingly necessitated a policy of selective engagement.

Like Brazil, South Africa has also been active in both global economic and global security issues. South Africa's voluntary dismantling of its nuclear programme after the end of apartheid and its subsequent international elevation as the only 'roll-back' nuclear state provided South Africa with an international moral standing and allowed it to capture a unique niche in the non-proliferation regime (Van Wyk, 2012). South Africa also actively engaged with global trade and development, including its role as the leading African state in promoting the Doha Development Agenda and acting as Africa's representative in various negotiating committees of the WTO. In recent years, there has been a shift towards a form of selective engagement that prioritises economic over security issues. To some degree, this has been the result of the overstretching of South Africa's foreign policy, the contradictions in the country's positions on human rights, and its Southern shift towards Africa and the BRICS. The Zuma administration has now declared that the priorities of South African foreign policy are about attracting FDI, strengthening economic ties with the BRICS and providing leadership for the African continent. President Zuma's repeated pronouncement that economic diplomacy is South Africa's 'apex priority' and his lack of reference to peace and security issues (Allison, 2016), have confirmed that South Africa displays the selective engagement of a middle power since it retains its diplomatic activism in critical areas of global governance, even if these now include mainly economic and developmental issues.

The fifth aspect of the behavioural model argues that Brazil and South Africa can be classified as middle powers if they are successful in providing intellectual and entrepreneurial leadership that can have an impact, even when operating against the preferences of major powers. Brazil and South Africa have strived to provide new ideas for global governance while exerting influence through their diplomatic expertise. In contrast to Western middle powers such as Canada and Australia that have traditionally contributed to US-led policies, Brazil has assumed assertive initiatives that have been reflective of middle power leadership and which have run

counter to US preferences, such as its 2010 effort at brokering a nuclear energy agreement with Iran (Neack, 2013). Brazil's initiatives, however, have often suffered from contradictions due to the over-ambitious roles assumed by the country in global affairs, the lack of material resources and the contradictions created by Brazil's solidarity with the global South. Brazil has mostly acted as an international manager that promotes order, stability and consistency in regional and global affairs through international law and consensus-building diplomacy (Gardini, 2016). For example, Brazil's has promoted the norm of 'Responsibility while Protecting' (RwP) as an alternative to R2P with the aim of constraining the use of military force and strengthening the authority of the UNSC. While Brazil initially promoted the concept in opposition to the NATO operations in Libya, it has failed in recent years to provide a new concept paper on the specifics of RwP and has withdrawn from the sponsorship of the concept (Kenkel and Stefan, 2016). Such an approach shows Brazil's willingness to act against the preferences of major powers, but fails to provide a sustained form of leadership that can generate new ideas and practices in global governance.

In South Africa's case, leadership has been very much dependant upon recognition by Western and non-Western powers. South Africa's intellectual leadership includes different diplomatic initiatives such as promoting an African approach to R2P, promoting closer coordination between the UNSC and the African Union Peace and Security Council, prioritising a Southern agenda for Non-Agricultural Market Access (NAMA) in the WTO, and ensuring that the newly formed BRICS Development Bank will prioritise the funding of Africa's development. South Africa has acted as norm entrepreneur in the African Union by promoting norms of human security, negotiated forms of conflict-resolution, and the protection of vulnerable populations, while applying these norms through its participation in conflicts in Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo. It has also been the first African country to join and ratify the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC), defying US pressures to exit the organisation and suffering as a consequence material costs in decreased US military aid funding (Grant and Hamilton, 2016). While such leadership would meet the behavioural definition proposed in this paper, recent years have witnessed a retreat from a right-based foreign policy as South Africa has announced it will withdraw from the ICC, while its closer alignment with the BRICS has forced

South Africa to refrain from any initiatives that would undermine its relations with these states. Due its diplomatic activism, South Africa has continuously been rewarded with positions that allow it to act as the representative of Africa in key fora such as the G20, the UNSC and the Green Room negotiations of the WTO. Such ‘symbolic hegemony’, however, has remained dependant upon the willingness of other powers to support, both ideationally and materially, South Africa’s approach to regional governance (Alden and Schoeman, 2015b). South Africa’s leadership therefore appears successful in promoting alternative ideas for global governance, but remains heavily dependant upon other Western and Southern powers for promoting its preferences and appears unable to act in opposition to these other powers.

The final aspect of the behavioural model suggests that Brazil and South Africa can be classified as middle powers if they can provide leadership that is both indispensable in facilitating like-minded coalitions and distinct from the band-wagoning and counter-balancing functions performed by other states. Both states have acted as catalysts in forming and leading coalitions that include regional formations, coalitions with other developing countries, and coalitions with other Southern powers. In the WTO, coalitions such as the G-20 (Trade), which was led by Brazil, and NAMA-11, which was led by South Africa, have exercised pressure against major economies and have mobilised smaller states into forms of assertive diplomacy that would be unfeasible in the absence of Brazil and South Africa’s leadership. Brazil and South Africa have also been instrumental in forming new forms of global coalitions that are centred on Southern powers. In 2003, the formation of the IBSA Dialogue Forum was heralded as a new form of Southern leadership that departed from the traditional bloc diplomacy of the Third World and allowed for more flexible and proactive forms of coalition-building that sought to shape, rather than resist, the norms and organising principles of the liberal order (Alden and Vieira, 2005).

Many academic works have questioned whether the IBSA and the BRICS states share common views, expectations and interests over the current state and future of the liberal international order. It has also been noted that the voting behaviour of the IBSA and BRICS states in different fora such as the UN Human Rights Council and the UN General Assembly demonstrate a divergence of interests, and a lack of common vision and strategy (Hooijmaaijers and Keukeleire, 2016; Jordaan, 2015).

The IBSA Forum also appears to have been marginalised since 2011, when South Africa joined the BRICS, and has not been holding regular summit since that point. Despite such limitations, the BRICS group has remained a foremost priority for both Brazil and South Africa since it has largely comprised their main source of influence in international affairs. While many have viewed the group as obstructionist and typical of counter-balancing and defensive behaviour, the group's consistent advocacy of reforming global governance has been reflective of a new form of international responsibility that seeks to provide global public goods in issues such as trade, the environment and human rights (Culp, 2016). Despite divergent material interests and preferences, the group has often been cohesive (such as resisting Russia been expelled from the G20 after the Ukraine crisis) and has served as the archetype for new forms of South-South cooperation, with other states attempting to emulate its functions (such as the MIKTA group). In conclusion, Brazil and South Africa have performed an indispensable role in establishing new forms of South-South coalition-building. Even though the degree of like-mindedness in specific formations such as the IBSA and BRICS groups is debatable, these new forms of cooperation and coordination between Southern powers have clearly been consolidated as a prime form of international relations for Brazil, South Africa and the other states that participate in these groups.

Conclusion

The distinctive category of the behavioural model discussed in this article provides a set of additional criteria for classifying middle powers. To adhere to a rigid selection process, this article proposes that states that fail to meet any of these criteria cannot be considered as full-fledged middle powers. In this respect, all six criteria can be considered as equally important for middle power classification, especially since they are inter-linked in terms of both ideational influence and entrepreneurial effectiveness. Many middle range-states would therefore fail to meet some or even all of the aforementioned behavioural patterns and other terms must be used for classifying such states (such as regional, secondary or intermediate states). It is therefore expected that middle powers would derive from the category of middle-

range states but comprise a more select group of states that display both the willingness and capacity to shape international affairs.

The cases of Brazil and South Africa demonstrate how the distinctive category of the behavioural model allows for a more rigid selection process. While the two cases meet four of the behavioural criteria (good international citizenship, crisis management diplomacy, selective engagement and coalition-building with like-minded states), they fail to fully meet two criteria (multilateral influence and leadership). Both states have demonstrated a strong propensity for multilateral activism and leadership in their foreign policy, but their performance has been fluctuating, especially during recent administrations in the two countries. While under the traditional behavioural model it would have been sufficient for Brazil and South Africa to demonstrate preference for such forms of diplomatic engagement in order to be classified as middle powers, shifting emphasis to ideational influence and entrepreneurial effectiveness suggests that the two states' global role as middle powers can be questioned.

Such classification has important implications for the study of emerging states from the global South. The behavioural model allows for a more thorough examination of the agency of emerging powers in international politics, and questions the internationalist impact of emerging states that seek to establish their regional dominance and act as major players in international politics. In terms of the regional dimension, many emerging states aspire to project and consolidate their regional leadership but this is not sufficient for being classified as middle powers. Such states are often confined to regional systems, constrained by regional rivalries, lacking the capacity for foreign policy innovation and often remaining confined to a reactive and defensive foreign policy mode. While the literature suggests that such regionally oriented states bear certain similarities with the statecraft and foreign policy displayed by middle powers, the behavioural model presented in this article demonstrates that such states would fail to meet most of the aforementioned behavioural criteria, even if they demonstrate a preference for a middle power role. Many emerging states therefore possess middle-range capabilities that shape, to a certain extent, their options towards stronger and weaker states, but only a limited number normally opts for

deploying such capabilities on an international rather than a regional level, while also being relatively effective in the pursuit of such assertive internationalist initiatives.

In terms of major power ambitions, the behavioural model reveals the possibility that emerging states from the global South can display middle power behaviour even if they possess material capabilities above the middle-range category. There are two principal reasons why this may be the case. First, the influence of emerging states in international regimes is not only determined by their material capabilities but also by their ideational and entrepreneurial resources. This point is often omitted in the current literature that views the material capabilities of emerging states as easily convertible into increased power and influence. Such determinism does not account for types of internationalism that are more reflective of a middle power orientation in foreign policy, as has been discussed in this article. Second, and linked to the above, emerging states often appear reluctant to provide structural leadership in order to reshape global governance and rather opt for a moderate approach to international negotiations across critical issues such as global trade, climate change and humanitarian intervention. Such states are unwilling to fully mobilise their resources to transform international regimes and often remain confined to cautious middle power roles, at least in the short-run. These cases can fit the behavioural model presented in this article and demonstrate that emerging states from the global South can pursue a middle power path before they reach the position through which they can assume major power rights and responsibilities. The behavioural model overall highlights both the possibilities and limitations of the foreign policies of emerging states, and suggests that prior to any discussion on whether such states can assume major power roles, it is first necessary to examine their global influence and effectiveness as middle powers.

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